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ABSTRACT

This booklet for 4-H members who elect to undertake projects in child caregiving provides guidelines and information that help children and adolescents between 9 and 19 years of age: (1) understand infants' physical, mental, social, and emotional growth; (2) learn to care for a baby and promote feelings of security and safety; and (3) choose types of play that infants enjoy. Included in the guide are age-related suggestions for selecting projects; information on the characteristics and development of infants; an observation form; recommended ways of caring for infants; information about ways infants learn through play; and guidelines for evaluating toys. Sources for additional help with projects are listed. A "leader's guide" for both the infant and toddler units is appended. (RH)

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Nebraska Cooperative Extension 4-H 310

# 4-H CHILD DEVELOPMENT

# THE INFANT

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# The Infant: 4-H Child Development

Name _____ Age (Jan. 1) _____ Year _____

Years in 4-H _____ Name of Club _____

Signature of Leader or Parent _____

| I plan to do these activities: | From this activity I learned: | Comments: |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |

Presentations or community service activities:

# THE INFANT
## 4-H Child Development Project

**Connie M. Francis**
**Extension Family Life Specialist**

Welcome to the 4-H Child Development Project. This project is written in four separate parts:

**The Infant (Birth to 18 months)**

**The Toddler (18 months to 3 years)**

**The Preschooler (3 to 6 years)**

**Middle Childhood (6 to 8 years)**

You have chosen to study the infant. The objectives of this unit are:

* To understand how an infant grows physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.
* To learn how to care for a baby and promote feelings of security and safety.
* To choose types of play an infant enjoys.

The amount of responsibility you will have for caring for a child in this project depends on your age. Your age also will determine how you will study the infant you are watching. The next page has some ideas about what you may do in this project.

# PROJECT SUGGESTIONS 1

**9-11 years old**

Because you are very young, we suggest you do not take a babysitting job to complete this project. You may choose to observe and help with your infant brother, sister or cousin, or an infant in your neighborhood. You will feel more comfortable learning about the baby if an adult is with you at all times.

In this project you may learn how to:

* feed and burp an infant.
* play with infant.
* give the infant a bottle.
* change an infant's diaper.
* lift, hold and carry an infant.
* select the best kind of toys for an infant.
* make a simple toy for an infant.

In a notebook or journal, write down what you learn about infants as you do the activities in the project.

**12-14 years old**

If you and your parents feel you are capable of taking care of an infant by yourself, you may babysit as you complete this project.

In this project you may learn how to:

* feed and burp an infant.
* bathe an infant, with an adult present.
* change an infant's diaper.
* dress an infant.
* select the best kind of toys for an infant.
* make a simple toy for an infant.

Using the information in this project on clothing an infant, visit one or more stores and make a written comparison of three different baby garments.

In a notebook or journal, write down what you learn about infants as you do the activities in the project.

**15-19 years old**

You may select activities from the lists for 9-11- year-olds and 12-14- year-olds. In addition, do some reading and write a short paper on a specific topic of interest to you. Topics might include colic, teething, infant play and a baby's diet.

# UNDERSTANDING INFANCY 2

A newborn infant is entirely dependent on other people.

A baby needs food and warmth, and a feeling of being cherished and loved. Holding, rocking and singing to an infant will make the child's first months seem very secure.

An infant's life changes rapidly. It is remarkable how fast a baby grows from a helpless infant to a person with an individual will and personality.

A smile is the beginning of an infant's social life. At first, smiles are showered on everyone alike; but later babies smile when they recognize familiar people.

It is interesting to watch an infant learn to talk. Crying comes first, but soon the baby begins to discover that a voice can make many sounds. The baby repeats sounds over and over to attract attention. Soon the infant has learned a few words to express feelings.

Gradually, the infant expresses many feelings such as fear, anger or love. The infant is learning to relate to others.

Fear is one of the first feelings a baby expresses. Loud or sudden noises may cause a baby to cry.

When strangers approach, or when people who are familiar go away, some babies may get scared and cry. But if a stranger approaches an infant slowly, the baby can get to know him or her gradually and not be frightened.

A sudden change in daily routine may also frighten or upset the infant. That is why it is important to follow the baby's regular schedule carefully.

You need patience and kindness when caring for infants of any age. A secure infant is one who feels wanted and loved.

To help you understand how infants develop mentally, physically, socially and emotionally, observe an infant and fill in the chart on the following page. You may want to copy this chart and put it in your journal. By observing the same child two or three times during your project, you can see how the infant has changed. Or, you can see how individual children develop at different rates by observing more than one child of similar ages.

# INFANT OBSERVATION FORM

Name of Child_____Date_____

Age_____ Boy_____ Girl_____ Weight:_____ pound,_____ ounces

Height:_____inches

(Write YES or NO in each blank.)

**Physical Development**

_____lifts head and controls it _____sits up

_____creeps _____walks with help

_____crawls up stairs (Tell how_____

_____)

_____toilet training _____handles a spoon

_____has teeth (how many? _____) _____handles a cup

_____plays simple games (What kind?_____

_____)

_____sleeps well (How long? _____ hours napping, _____ hours at night)

**Social Development**

_____smiles regularly _____friendly to you

_____friendly to strangers _____plays well alone

_____plays well with other children

**Mental Development**

_____notices people _____ gurgles and babbles

_____likes to explore surroundings _____has short attention span

_____says words (What words? _____)

**Emotional Development**

_____overall a happy child _____afraid of new experiences

_____afraid of the dark _____afraid of strangers

_____cries when parents leave _____gets angry quickly

_____has temper tantrums _____wants attention

_____seems secure _____shows pleasure with attention

_____shows love for stuffed toys, toys, dolls, favorite blanket _____patient enough to wait for needs to be met

If you have additional comments about any of the observations above, record them in your journal.

# I AM AN INFANT

When I was born, I was between 18 and 20 inches long and weighed about six to nine pounds. If you measured me with a yardstick, you would see that my head is one-fourth of the length of my body. My neck is so short you can hardly see it. Notice my pudgy legs and arms. Because I need a lot of food to make me grow. I have a large liver in proportion to the rest of my body. This makes my stomach look big.

This is how I grow:

**1-3 weeks:** I like to sleep a lot. When I'm awake, I cry for food and a clean diaper. I may enjoy being cuddled, or I may not.

**1-2 months:** Bright and moving objects fascinate me. I can coo and smile at people, and I like to listen to music and voices. I can hold my rattle but I don't like to play with it. I may hit myself in the face and head with my rattle because I can't control it.

**3-4 months:** I recognize my bottle and will reach for it. My head doesn't need to be held any more. I can squeal and laugh aloud. I surprise everyone and roll over in my crib.

**5-6 months:** I like to sit up with help. I play very actively with my rattle. I can recognize voices, people and objects.

**7-8 months:** I can sit by myself now. I have my first tooth. I like to repeat sounds I hear. Strange people and places may scare me.

**9-10 months:** I can sit by myself and am trying to stand. I can crawl all over, too. My parents are proud when I say words. I finally know what "no" means.

**1 year:** I am very wobbly but can walk with help. No more bottles for me—I can drink from my own cup.

**1 1/2 years:** I am still wobbly when I walk. I may walk backward and forward. I may climb stairs. Everyone thinks this is dangerous. I may not be able to speak words anyone can understand or I may know a few words. I use lots of baby talk to try to talk with others.

# CARING FOR THE INFANT 3

**Feeding An Infant**

Babies need food because it:
* satisfies hunger.
* provides security.
* provides nutrition for growth.

A baby feels warm and safe when being held and given something that makes the empty feeling inside go away. It will take several years before the baby uses the word "food," but the secure and content feeling that goes along with being fed is always there.

Most newborn babies need to be fed every three or four hours. They eat a specially prepared formula that contains all the nutrients a very small baby needs.

Babies may not mind whether their formula is warm or cold, as long as it is always about the same. Be sure to ask the parents.

If you warm the bottle, do it immediately before feeding according to the parents' directions. However, there are two precautions:

*Never use a microwave oven to warm the bottle. Microwave heating can warm the formula unevenly and create some hot spots in the liquid that will burn the baby's mouth.

*Do not let bottles stand out of the refrigerator to warm between feedings. This may cause spoilage.

Feed the baby in a quiet, cheerful place where there is nothing to distract the baby from eating.

Hold the baby in a half-sitting position, supporting the head and back. Tip the bottle so the neck and nipple are always filled with formula. Occasionally move the nipple in the baby's mouth to make sucking more active. Do not force the baby to drink all the formula. This may lead to poor eating habits later.



A baby needs to be burped several times while drinking a bottle to get rid of the air taken in while eating. Hold the baby against your shoulder and rub the back in a circular motion or pat gently until the baby burps. Place a towel or diaper over your shoulder to protect your clothes. (Some babies prefer to be held sitting up to burp.)

Many babies begin to stop the late evening or middle of the night feeding by the time they are six weeks old. Other foods are added to a baby's diet sometime between six weeks and six months.

Enriched cereals such as rice cereal or oatmeal are usually the baby's first solid food. Gradually, strained fruits, vegetables and meat are added.

Because a baby cannot chew, foods must be strained to remove all coarse fiber that might irritate the digestive system. Like formula, these foods may be eaten warm or at room temperature, according to the parents' directions.

At around eight to ten months most babies can be shifted gradually from strained food to more coarsely textured junior foods and finger foods. Finger foods may be anything from mashed potatoes, to soft cooked vegetables, to diced fruit and crackers. A baby at this age is not neat. Be prepared for a mess.

When feeding a baby strained or junior foods, use a clean spoon to remove a small amount from the jar and then refrigerate the leftover portion. You don't need to put it in another storage container because the original jar was sterilized during processing.

Toward the end of the first year and into the second year, a baby will want to eat alone using his or her own little cup and spoon. It will take a long time for the baby to learn to get the cup or spoon to the mouth right side up. While the baby is learning, don't scold the baby for being messy.

Every baby is an individual. Some are big eaters; some are small eaters. A baby may eat more at some meals than at others. Whatever the baby's eating habits may be, make mealtime pleasant and relaxed. When the baby finishes eating, don't force any more food.

**Bathing An Infant**

Bath time is a happy time for you and the infant you are watching. In the tub a baby will splash, kick and babble away in baby talk.

Bathing an infant is a grownup's responsibility. It takes a lot of practice before you can bathe a baby alone. Do not attempt to give a bath unless there is an adult to help you.

A good time to give an infant a bath is just before the mid-morning feeding. Don't bathe a baby right after feeding since the infant may get overly excited and spit up.

For the first few weeks the infant should get a sponge bath rather than a tub bath. Lightly sponge the baby with a warm, damp wash cloth, paying special attention to the baby's face and bottom. Use a piece of cotton moistened with baby lotion or mineral oil to clean the baby's bottom. Thoroughly dry the baby with a soft towel.

Once the baby gets used to the feeling of water, the infant may start taking a bath in a little tub. Line the tub with a small soft towel to make it safe and more comfortable.

The baby's bath water should be around body temperature (95-100 degrees F). Test the water with your elbow. If it doesn't feel either hot or cold, it will be the right temperature. The room should be warm and free from drafts.

Assemble all the things you will need for the bath, including the clothes the infant will wear after the bath. Never leave the baby alone in the water or on the table.

When you are completely ready, bring the infant to the table or sink and remove the baby's clothing.

It is much easier to wash the baby's face, head, neck, eyes, nose and ears before putting the baby into the water. (It is best to let the parents clean the baby's delicate ears, eyes and nose.)

Put the baby slowly into the tub. Your left arm should support the head, neck and back, and your fingers should be around the upper arm for a secure hold.

Gently wash the scalp with a light lather of mild soap. Rinse well and pat dry.

Rub some soap between your hands and the wash cloth, and gently wash the baby all over, including all crevices and folds in the skin. Rinse gently, holding the infant in a half-sitting position.

Gently lift the infant out of the water and pat dry. Rub a little lotion or oil in the folds of the skin and other delicate areas.

Dress the baby quickly so the infant doesn't get chilled. Lay the baby in a safe place before you clear away the bath supplies.

Work quickly, but carefully, and the infant will enjoy the bath much more.

### Clothing An Infant

At birth an infant's head is about one-fourth the body length. The shoulders are narrow, and the legs and arms are short. Most of the body consists of stomach.

Because babies grow rapidly they need just a few clothes. Garments and accessories should be soft, easily laundered, lightweight and absorbent. Cotton clothes are wise choices. Cotton helps retain the baby's body heat and keeps the body temperature uniform.

The baby's layette, or wardrobe, consists of loose-fitting garments such as nightgowns, kimonos or wrappers, shirts, various sizes and weights of blankets, sweaters, bibs, and diapers. A baby doesn't need booties except for warmth. A very young infant's feet and hands may feel cold to the touch; however, they may actually be warm enough, since a young infant's circulatory system is not fully developed.

When you dress and undress a baby, roll the baby from side to side, taking the clothes off one arm or leg and then off the other arm or leg. So the baby doesn't get chilled, never take all the baby's clothes off at one time, except for a bath.

### An Infant's Sleeping Habits

During the first few weeks of life a baby will sleep most of the time, only waking up for food and a dry diaper. By the end of the first year, a baby will sleep about 12 hours at night and take a morning and afternoon nap.

A baby's bedroom should not have drafts or bright lights that may wake the baby up. It is best to continue normal household sounds, so you need not whisper while a baby is sleeping.

Keep a sleeping infant covered, and make sure the blankets don't get pulled over the face.

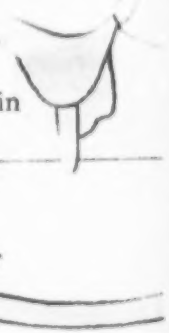
Many babies like to sleep on their stomachs with their knees tucked up under them. Others prefer to sleep on their sides. For safety reasons, babies should not sleep on their backs because they might choke. Ask the parents what the baby's favorite sleeping position is.

A baby should not share a bed with anyone else. The sides of the crib should be up so the baby won't roll out. Bars should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart so the baby's head will not get stuck between them. To learn more about safety standards for cribs and other children's furnishings, ask your Extension agent for the Fact Sheet called, "Children's Furnishings for a Safer Environment" Home Furnishings/ Interiors Fact Sheet 45.

### When An Infant Cries

Crying is an expression of feelings. It is the first means a baby has of communicating with others. By crying, a baby lets you know that something is wrong.

A crying baby may be wet, hungry, sick or just uncomfortable. Babies soon learn that crying brings comforting results such as a bottle, clean diapers or a cuddle.



A baby who wants to be fed will cry in a fussy manner. Stuffing a fist in the mouth or making sucking movements with the lips are two other signs of a hungry baby.

An older baby will begin to listen for familiar sounds that mean food is coming, such as the click of the refrigerator door.

Fussy crying between meals may mean a wet or soiled diaper. Change the diaper promptly and the crying will stop.

Like older people, babies like to change position. So, until they are old enough to roll and move themselves, small babies will cry when they are uncomfortable and want to move.

Older babies will cry to get attention. This is their way of saying they want to be held and played with.

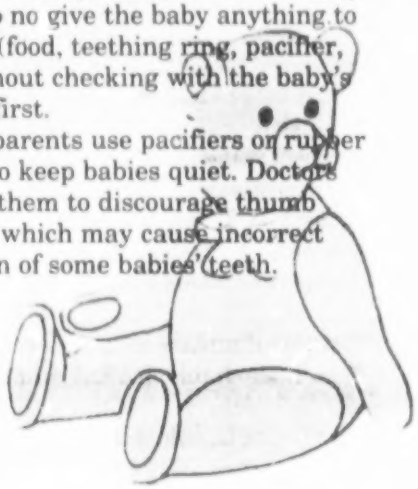
Hard crying spells, especially after eating, may be caused by colic. Colic is common among babies during their first three or four months. A red face, hard crying and even screaming as if in severe pain may indicate colic.

The cause of colic seems to be connected with the nervous and digestive systems. Report this kind of crying to the parents so they can watch for further symptoms. All you can do is make the baby as comfortable as possible.

Babies six to eight months old may fuss or cry because they are cutting their first teeth. While teething, a baby may lose its appetite and put anything possible, like fingers and fists, into the mouth.

To ease the baby's discomfort, give hard toast or teething toast to chew on. A teething ring of hard rubber or plastic also will help a baby that is cutting teeth. Do no give the baby anything to chew on (food, teething ring, pacifier, etc.) without checking with the baby's parents first.

Many parents use pacifiers on rubber nipples to keep babies quiet. Doctors also use them to discourage thumb sucking, which may cause incorrect formation of some babies' teeth.



# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY 4

### Playing With An Infant

Smiling is the first sign of infant play. A baby will respond to a parent's smile at about eight weeks. Gradually play develops into cheerful gurgles and noises, and vigorous hand and leg movements.

An infant not only enjoys playing with parents, but must also learn to occupy time in the crib. Watching brightly colored and moving objects hanging above the bed is a two- to four-month old baby's idea of fun. Plastic shapes hung between the top rails of the crib within the child's reach help develop reaching skills.

Toward the middle of the first year a baby's greatest joy are objects such as rattles and teething rings. Because babies put everything into their mouths, be sure anything they have in their hands is also safe for their mouths.

NEVER allow the baby to play with any toy so small that the whole thing will fit into the baby's mouth. For example, some pull toys have strings or handles that will fit into the mouth.

During the second half of the first year, babies will begin to like simple games. Babies enjoy playing pat-a-cake, peekaboo, and "This Little Pig Went to Market."

Don't try to make a baby laugh by tossing, tickling or making frightening motions. The baby may be only frightened. These motions also may damage the central nervous system.

On warm sunny days, older babies enjoy going for a ride in a carriage or stroller. However, do not take a baby out of the house without the parents' permission.

### Toys for Babies

Because babies have short attention spans, they will play with a toy for only a short time. Therefore, babies need a number of things to handle, bang, suck and throw.

Good toys for babies are ones that:

* are brightly colored
* squeak or make pleasant sounds
* help develop movement and reaching skills
* help develop coordination
* satisfy the urge to cuddle, squeeze and love
* are durable (can be thrown, dropped and banged around)
* have no sharp edges or points
* have no parts that can come loose and be put in the mouth
* are large enough so they cannot be swallowed
* won't cause illness if sucked on
* provide a variety of textures for feeling.

Ideas for suitable baby toys:

* colorful mobile to hang over crib
* soft, washable stuffed animals and dolls
* large, soft, colored balls (Balloons are dangerous. When they break, baby may choke on small pieces.)
* large building blocks

* noisemakers—rattles, bells, shakers, chimes
* rubber or plastic bath toys that float
* beads—many shapes; large enough so they cannot be put into the mouth; fun to shake
* simple push-pull toys
* nested cans or boxes
* squeeze toys that squeak
* simple take-apart, put-together toys.

**Making Baby Toys**

Choose a toy you would like to make. Be sure the toy you select is safe for an infant to use.

Here are some ideas:

**Mobile**

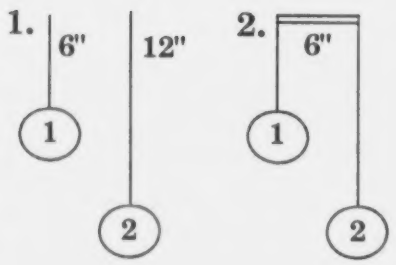
You will need:

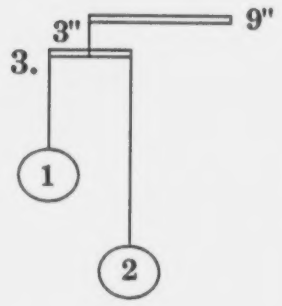
* three dowels or stiff wires about 12 inches, 9 inches, and 6 inches long
* nylon thread or cord, fish line, sewing thread, or string
* glue
* scissors
* ruler or measuring tape
* four small brightly-colored items to hang from the mobile. These should all be about the same size and weight.

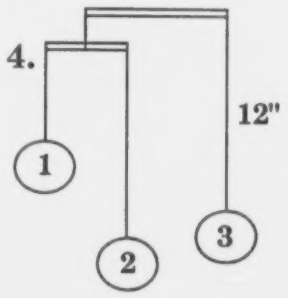
To make mobile:

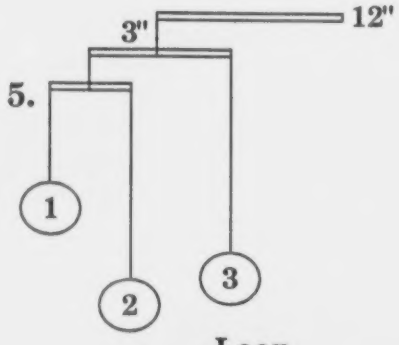
1. Cut two lengths of string or thread, one 6" and one 12" long. Tie each string to a brightly-colored item.

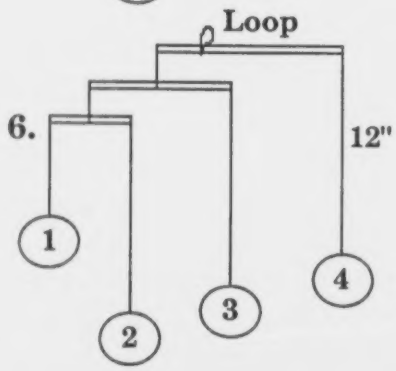
2. Tie one string to each end of the 6" dowel or wire.



3. Cut another piece of string 3" long. Tie one end to the middle of the 6" dowel or wire. Attach the other end to one end of the 9" dowel or wire.

4. Cut a piece of string 12" long. Tie one end to another decorative item and one end to the other end of the 9" dowel or wire.

5. Cut a piece of string 3" long. Tie one end about 3" from the end of the 9" dowel or wire measuring from the end attached to the 6" dowel. Tie the other end to the end of the 12" dowel or wire.

6. Cut a piece of string 12" long. Tie one end to the last decorative item, and the other end to the 12" dowel or wire.

7. Cut a length of string to use for a hanging loop. Tie it about 3" from the end of the 12" dowel or wire, measuring from the end attached to the 9" dowel or wire.

8. Hold the mobile up to check balance. Shorten string if necessary. Use a little glue to help secure each attachment. Let glue dry before hanging.

Your mobile may hang from the ceiling above the baby's crib. It should hang low enough so the baby can enjoy the brightly-colored objects, but high enough so the baby cannot reach it from the crib.

**Nested Cans or Boxes**

Find several cans or boxes that fit inside each other. Be sure all edges are smooth and free from sharp points. Paint with brightly colored, non-toxic paint. A baby can stack them on top of each other upside down, or nest them inside each other.

**Stuffed Animals or Dolls**

Find patterns for simple stuffed animals or dolls in books or stores, or make up your own pattern. Use all washable materials so they can be washed easily. Do not attach buttons or other trim that a baby might pull off and swallow.

These are just some suggestions for toys for infants. Use your imagination and come up with ideas of your own.

When you have finished your toy, evaluate it using the "Guidelines for Evaluating Toys" on the following page. If your toy meets the requirements, give it to an infant play with it.

# GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING TOYS

### Originality

Creating and constructing imaginative toys can be an opportunity for you to express your knowledge and CREATIVITY.

1. Shows evidence of originality in design.
2. Exhibits unique use of available and inexpensive materials.
3. Is a creative adaptation of an existing idea.

| Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

### Safety

Toy should be designed so that a child can use the toy safely.

1. Is free of sharp or pointed edges.
2. Has been put together so that there are no exposed straight pins, sharp wires, rails, etc.
3. Is made of a material other than glass or brittle plastic.
4. Has been painted with non-toxic paint.
5. Is free of parts that deliberately pinch fingers, toes, or catch hair.
6. Is free of small detachable parts that can lodge in the windpipe, ears or nostrils.
7. Is of a material that would be difficult to bite into and/or swallow.
8. Cord or string is no longer than 12".

| Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

### Appropriate for the Child's Age and Development Skills

| Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

Toys are the child's tools for learning and are part of a rich learning environment. Toys should be appropriate and usable at each age level.

1. Attracts the child's attention and interest.
2. Stimulates the senses (color, textures, shape).
3. Enhances intellectual development.
4. Is versatile — can be used in a variety of ways.

### Promotes Growth and Development

| Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

Toy should be age specific.

1. Can be used by the child when playing alone as well as with others.
2. Encourages interaction between child and others.
3. Helps develop large muscle skills (reaching, grasping, kicking).
4. Helps develop small muscle coordination (picking up).

### Quality of Construction

| Superior | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

The toy should be able to withstand the rigors of child use.

1. Is durable.
2. Buttons, trims, and other parts are well-fitted and securely fastened.
3. Sewing is well done and secure.
4. Is washable.
5. Has been carefully and attractively constructed.
6. No rough edges and corners are smooth.

# FOR MORE HELP WITH YOUR PROJECT

* Ask your parents
* Ask your leader
* Read the 4-H Babysitting Project manual
* Refer to the following Fact Sheets (available at your Extension office):

FL12 Milestones of Baby's Growth
FL13 Your Baby at Three to Six Months
FL14 Your Baby at Six to Nine Months
FL15 Your Baby at Nine to Twelve Months
FL16 Your Child at Twelve to Fifteen Months
FL17 Your Child at Fifteen to Eighteen Months
FL50 Baby Sitting

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# SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Leo E. Lucas, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

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Nebraska Cooperative Extension 4-H 311

# 4-H CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
# LEADER'S GUIDE
## FOR THE INFANT AND TODDLER UNITS

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Extension Family Life Specialist

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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# 4-H CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS LEADER'S GUIDE for the INFANT and TODDLER UNITS

**Connie M. Francis**
**Extension Family Life Specialist**

## INTRODUCTION

The 4-H Child Development Project is written as four separate units:

**The Infant (birth to 18 months)**

**The Toddler (18 months to 3 years)**

**The Preschooler (3 to 6 years)**

**Middle Childhood (6 to 8 years)**

The goals of the 4-H Child Development Project are:

*To understand how children grow physically, mentally, socially and emotionally from infancy through middle childhood.
*To learn how to care for children from birth through eight years.
*To choose appropriate types of play for each age level.

Your role as a leader is to help 4-H'ers meet these goals.

This Leader's Guide is designed as a tool for you. It will help you plan learning experiences for 4-H'ers studying "The Infant (birth to 18 months) or "The Toddler" (18 months to 3 years) in the 4-H Child Development Project.

As you read the member's manual, you will get ideas for learning activities and experiences that will help 4-H'ers understand the developmental levels through which children grow. One of the best learning experiences a 4-H'er can have in this project is to observe more than one child of similar ages. This helps the 4-H'er realize that, although there are levels through which all children progress, each is unique and each proceeds at his or her own individual rate.

Consider using older 4-H'ers to help you with activities and learning experiences for younger 4-H'ers in the Child Development Project.

# WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Most young people within an age group have some of the general characteristics typical of the age and developmental stage. However, each child develops at his or her own pace and each is a unique individual. Below are typical characteristics of two age groups with which you will be working. You are likely to observe many of these characteristics in your 4-H members, but you will not find all of them in any one member.

**Characteristics of 9- to 11- year-olds:**

* Interest in making things is high.
* Large muscle control is fairly well developed.
* Fine finger control is beginning to develop.
* Peer group is of increasing importance.
* Independence from adults is important.
* Have limited decision making abilities.
* Have abounding energy.
* Find it hard to sit still for very long.
* Need to experience early success.
* Need to feel loved and accepted.
* Attention span is good for short periods of time.
* Active participation increases attention span.
* Searching for self-identity and need assistance in building a strong sense of positive personal confidence.
* Need help managing their time.[1]

**Characteristics of 12- to 14- year-olds:**

* Steady height and weight growth continues.
* Small muscle control is fairly well developed.
* Abstract thought is possible, and plans can extend over several weeks.
* Activities can be evaluated with considerable insight.
* Attention span increases.
* Need self-expression and self-directed activities to develop intellectual skills.
* Need to know and understand the "why" of things.
* Peer group is very important.
* Prejudice may be apparent.
* Both cooperation and competition are enjoyed. Cooperation is more difficult to learn than is competition.
* Independence from adults is important.
* Concept of self is enhanced by feelings of competence.

The 4-H Leader Handbook (4-H 38) is a guide to help leaders work with young people and to link them to the Extension office in their area, and to the community. Each module in the handbook provides information on such topics as understanding 4-H, involving parents in 4-H, holding effective meetings, understanding youth and helping 4-H'ers with project records.

[1]Rose Marie Tondl, SEWING FOR FUN: LEADER'S GUIDE. (University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension.)

# RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 4-H LEADER

1. Attend leader training meetings when possible to receive information on teaching 4-H'ers.

2. Plan meetings for project members.

3. Explain what the project can offer. Encourage 4-H'ers to pursue areas of individual interest and share their findings with others.

4. Help individuals evaluate their projects.

5. Encourage participation in presentations and exhibits to gain poise and confidence.

6. Learn and grow with the members. Broaden your own knowledge in child development.

7. Ask your Extension Agent-Home Economics for help in getting bulletins and other materials and resources listed in this guide.

8. Involve parents in this 4-H project. Begin by encouraging 4-H'ers to discuss their project plans with their parents. Parents can take part in 4-H and relieve you of some of the responsibilities. For example, they can help with transportation; work out details for a tour or field trip; have meetings in their homes; or serve as resource persons for games, activities or lesson presentations.

# A 4-H PHILOSOPHY

Much of the 4-H program centers around one major learning technique—the project. A project is a real-life learning experience through which the 4-H member establishes personal objectives, sets out to accomplish these objectives and finishes the job. Projects help members learn by doing and are planned to teach life skills. These skills will help 4-H'ers function as adults in our society and accept responsibilities for community leadership.

Life skills help young people and adults fulfill their potential as individuals and group members. The life skills learned in 4-H include understanding self; relating with others; decision making/problem solving; acquiring, analyzing and using information; managing resources and working with others.

In the 4-H Child Development project, 4-H'ers will learn and practice these life skills. As a leader, you can encourage 4-H'ers to talk about and share what they observe and do, both formally and informally. Urge them to experiment, ask questions and try new things. Give them opportunities to identify problems and attempt solutions, to set goals and make choices, and to evaluate what they have learned. In this way, you will help them develop life skills which will be useful to them long after they have completed this project.

# PLANNING THE PROJECT MEETING

Below are suggested activities for club meetings. It is not necessary to complete all the activities and exercises. Select the ones that interest you and your club members the most.

Get members involved early in the meeting through roll call, reports of what they have done at home, simple demonstrations, short talks and actual activities. Provide some opportunity for recognition of and participation by every member at each meeting.

Field trips add variety to a club program. For the convenience of everyone concerned, make arrangements for trips well in advance Talk to the person in charge about what you want members to learn and see, their interest and age range, the time of your arrival and departure, and anything else that will make the visit worthwhile for 4-H'ers and pleasant for the host.

Involve Junior Leaders as well as 4-H parents in club meetings. Ask them to do a demonstration, assist with a group activity or help individual 4-H'ers.

Take some time at your first meeting to organize. Introduce the project to members and their parents. Explain the project and, if possible, give examples of what is included in some of the units. Discuss keeping a journal to record project experiences and observations.

# THE INFANT

This project is about the development of infants from birth to 18 months. In it the 4-H'er will observe and learn about the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of infants. It is important to remind members that each child is unique and will progress through these stages at an individual rate. Ages given for various stages of development and accomplishment are only approximate.

For more information about the development and care of infants, refer to the following Fact Sheets, which are available at your Extension office:

* FL11 Your New Baby's Early Life
* FL12 Milestones of Baby's Growth
* FL13 Your Baby at Three to Six Months
* FL14 Your Baby at Six to Nine Months
* FL15 Your Baby at Nine to Twelve Months
* FL16 Your Child at Twelve to Fifteen Months
* FL17 Your Child at Fifteen to Eighteen Months
* FL40 Toys and Play for Young Children
* FL50 Baby Sitting
* FL80 Reading to Your Child
* Home Furnishings/Interiors Fact Sheet 45 Children's Furnishings for a Safer Environment
* Home Furnishings/Interiors Fact Sheet 46 Children's Furnishings Safety Check List

The following 4-H publications may also be useful to you:

*4-H 181 Communicating with Young Children
*4-H 267 The Sitter, Member Manual
*4-H 268 The Sitter, Leader Guide

The amount of responsibility a 4-H'er takes for actual care of a child in this project depends on the member's age and experience. The member's manual has project suggestions for members in three age groups: 9 to 11 years old, 12 to 14 years old, and 15 to 19 years old.

# UNDERSTANDING INFANCY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn how an infant grows physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* Why I have chosen to study infants.
* An experience I have had with an infant.
* Name one item which would be useful when caring for an infant.
* Ask each member to bring and show a picture of themselves as an infant.

**Topics to Talk About:**

* Characteristics of infants. See "I Am An Infant," page 7 in the member manual. Explain to 4-H'ers that developmental materials are generalized information to help us see the various stages through which a child moves. It is important to realize that each child develops at his or her own pace.
* How babies learn to communicate. Talk about forms of communication such as crying, smiling, coos and gurgles, and how a baby uses them to send messages.
* Observing babies. Discuss skills infants learn in each area: physical, social, mental and emotional development. Encourage members to observe as many infants as possible at a variety of age levels.
* Keeping a journal. Have members talk about keeping a Child Development journal in which they can record their observations. With a loose-leaf notebook 4-H'ers could duplicate the Observation Form and make several observations throughout their project. The 4-H'ers might also record other experiences in the project, and include pictures and newspaper or magazine articles about the development and care of babies.

**Activities:**

* Use project suggestions on page 4 of the member's manual. Discuss what each member would like to learn. Complete the first column of the Project Planning and Evaluation Sheet.
* Make the first journal entry as a group. Record your plans for the project year.
* Using the observation form provided on page 6 of the member manual, have members record changes in one infant over a period of time, and differences between two or more infants of approximately the same age.
* Visit a local day care center where 4-H'ers can observe more than one infant. Each member might select two children of the same approximate age and note similarities and differences in physical, emotional, mental and social development. Record what you see on Observation Forms. Encourage 4-H'ers to ask questions of the day care provider. (You and the members could prepare a list of questions ahead of time.)

# CARING FOR THE INFANT

Purpose: The 4-H'er will learn skills such as bathing, clothing and feeding the baby, and promoting feelings of security and safety.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* One safety rule for caring for an infant.
* A piece of clothing an infant needs.

**Possible Member Presentations:**

* How to heat a baby's bottle.
* How to feed and burp a baby.
* How to bathe an infant.
* How to select an infant's clothing.

**Topics for Discussion:**

* Feeding an infant. Discuss nutritional needs and how they change, how to hold a baby while giving a bottle and how to burp a baby. Talk about safety precautions for storing and heating baby food.
* Bathing an infant. Talk about how to do it, step by step. Emphasize safety precautions.
* Clothing an infant. Discuss types of clothing which are appropriate for an infant.

**Activities:**

* Invite a guest speaker to attend your 4-H meeting. Before the speaker arrives, develop a list of questions you would like to ask. Ideas for guest speakers include:

-a nurse to demonstrate infant care skills such as changing a diaper or dressing an infant.

-a mother to show how to feed a newborn.

-a doctor to explain immunization of infants — when and why.

-someone from community action to explain the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

* Demonstrate how to bathe an infant using a doll. Let each member try. Then talk about how to dress the baby and let members practice.
* As members develop skills in caring for an infant, and as they learn through observations and other experiences, encourage them to share what they have learned. This sharing may be done informally through group discussion or through formal presentations.
* Visit a store that sells infants' clothing. Look at size and age ranges listed. Check labels. Look for features which would make clothing easy or difficult to put on an infant.
* Check the price of cloth diapers versus disposable diapers. Considering cost, care requirements and environmental considerations, which type do members think would be the best buy? One or more members may want to make a poster or display showing what they found.
* Discuss safety features to look for in infant furnishings. Visit furniture stores and compare quality of construction, safety features and cost.
* Check prices on items for an infant's layette and decide how much it would cost to clothe an infant for the first three months of life.

# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn to choose types of play and toys suitable for infants.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* Your favorite toy as an infant.
* One way an infant plays.
* A safety tip for playing with an infant.
*An idea or picture of an infant toy to make.

**Topics to Talk About:**

* What makes a good toy for an infant? Use the section on "Toys for Babies," page 12 in the member manual as a discussion guide.
* Types of play that encourage an infant's development.

**Activities:**

* Collect four or five toys for babies. Ask members to evaluate each one for quality of construction, safety and appropriateness for an infant.
* Visit a store that sells toys. Look at specific features and at age recommendations on labels. Compare to recommendations in the 4-H Child Development manual for infants.
* Ask each member to bring supplies needed to make a mobile. Make mobiles at your meeting. You may want to enlist the help of one or two mothers or an older 4-H'er.

# AN ACHIEVEMENT MEETING

If possible, share the achievements of the members in this project at a final club "achievement" meeting. This would be an ideal time to invite families to learn about what members have done.

An achievement meeting could include an exhibit of members' work, displays or posters showing things learned, presentations by members, and sharing of observations about the growth and development of infants.

# THE TODDLER

This unit is about the development of toddlers from 18 months to 3 years. In it the 4-H'er will observe and learn about the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of toddlers. It is important for members to realize that each child is unique and progresses through developmental stages at an individual pace. Although ages are given for various stages of development and accomplishment, these are only approximate. Children will reach each level of development at varying ages.

For more information about the development and care of toddlers, refer to the following Fact Sheets available from your Extension office:

*FL18 Your Child at Eighteen to Twenty-One Months
*FL19 Your Child at Twenty-One to Twenty-Four Months
*FL20 Twenty-Four Months and Beyond
*FL40 Toys and Play for Young Children
*FL50 Baby Sitting

The following 4-H publications may also be useful:

*4-H 181 Communicating with Young Children
*4-H 267 The Sitter, Member Manual
*4-H 268 The Sitter, Leader Guide

Project suggestions in the member's manual are given for three age groups: 9 to 11 years old, 12 to 14 years old, and 15 to 19 years old. The amount of responsibility a 4-H'er takes for the care of a child in this project depends on the 4-H'ers age and experience.

# UNDERSTANDING THE TODDLER

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn how a toddler grows physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* Why I have chosen to study toddlers.
* One thing I know about toddlers.
* An experience I have had with a toddler.

**Topics to Talk About:**

*Characteristics of toddlers. See "I Am A Toddler" page 8 in the member manual. Emphasize that developmental materials are generalized information to help us see the various stages through which a child moves. It is important to remember that each child develops at his or her own pace.

* Observing toddlers. Refer to the Observation Form on page 6 in the member manual and discuss skills toddlers learn in each area: physical, social, mental and emotional development. Encourage members to observe as many toddlers as possible at a variety of age levels.

* Keeping a journal. Encourage members to keep a Child Development journal in which they record their observations. With a loose leaf notebook 4-H'ers could duplicate the Observation Form and make several observations throughout their project. The 4-H'ers might also record other experiences in the project, and include pictures and newspaper or magazine articles about the development and care of toddlers.

**Activities:**

* Use project suggestions on page 4 of the member manual. Discuss what each member would like to learn and do. Complete the first column of the Project Planning and Evaluation Sheet.

* Make a journal entry as a group. In it record your plans for the project year.

* Using the Observation Form provided on page 6 of the member's manual, have members record changes in one toddler over a period of time and differences between two or more toddlers of approximately the same age. Have members include these observations in their journal.

* Visit a local day care center where 4-H'ers can observe more than one toddler. Each member could select two children of the same approximate age and note similarities and differences in physical, emotional, mental and social development. Have members record what they see on Observation Forms. Encourage 4-H'ers to ask questions of the day care provider. (You and the members could prepare a list of questions together ahead of time.)

# CARING FOR THE TODDLER

Purpose: The 4-H'er will learn how to bathe, dress and feed the toddler and how to promote feelings of security and safety.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* One safety rule for caring for a toddler.
* A current issue affecting toddlers and their families.

**Possible Presentations:**

* Nutritional needs of a toddler.
* Clothing for a toddler.

**Topics to Talk About:**

* Feeding a toddler. Discuss nutritional needs and how they change as a toddler grows. Also talk about how toddlers begin to feed themselves.
* Safety pointers. Include safety considerations for playing, sleeping and bathing.
* Clothing a toddler. Types of clothing that are appropriate for a toddler.

**Activities:**

* Invite a guest speaker to attend your 4-H meeting. Before the speaker arrives, write a list of questions you would like to ask. Ideas for guest speakers include:
  - a parent of a toddler to talk about what the child is like.
  -a doctor to talk about childhood diseases.
  -a day care provider to talk about day care as a business.
  -a state legislator to discuss current legislation affecting families in your state.
* Visit a store that sells toddlers' clothing. Look at sizes, age ranges and features which would make it easier for a toddler to learn to dress alone. Check labels for care instructions.
* As members develop skills in caring for a toddler, and as they learn through observations and other experiences, encourage them to share what they have learned. This sharing may be done informally through group discussion or through formal presentations.

# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn to choose types of play and toys suitable for toddlers.

**Meeting Suggestions:** (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

**Roll Call Ideas:**

* Your favorite toy as a toddler.
* Name a toy a toddler would enjoy.
* A safety tip for playing with a toddler.
* An idea or picture of a toddler's toy to make.

**Possible Presentations:**

* Selecting or making a toy for a toddler.
* Reading a story to a toddler.

**Topics to Talk About:**

* Types of play which encourage a toddler's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.
* What makes a good toy for a toddler? Use the section on "Finding and Making Toys for the Toddler," page 17 in the member manual as a discussion guide.

**Activities:**

* Collect four or five toys for toddlers. Ask members to evaluate each toy for quality of construction, safety and appropriateness for a toddler.
* Visit a store that sells toys. Look at specific features and at age recommendations on labels. Compare to recommendations in the 4-H Child Development manual for toddlers.
* Look at toy advertisements and evaluate toys for safety and appropriateness.
* Encourage members to write in their journals about what they see. By observing a child's imaginative play a 4-H'er can learn a great deal about what the child is thinking and feeling.

# AN ACHIEVEMENT MEETING

If possible, share the achievements of the members in this project at a final club "achievement" meeting. This would be a good time to invite families to learn about what members have done.

An achievement meeting could include an exhibit of members' work, displays or posters showing things learned, presentations by members, and sharing of observations about the growth and development of toddlers.

## A Guide to Children's Toys

Children's rates of growth differ widely, but the sequence of the development is similar. The following guide is not a timetable. It shows a progression in which each new skill adds to and builds on the mastery of the ones before.

| STAGES | EMERGING SKILLS | TOYS THAT ENABLE | WAYS TO ENCOURAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ENJOYMENT OF THE FAMILIAR<br>(birth to about 6 months) | recognition of faces<br>anticipation of sequences<br>discovery of own body (hand, mouth and vocal play)<br>staring and listening intently<br>learning they can cause things to happen | stuffed toys with faces<br>reflective surfaces, toys to hold, suck, shake<br>crib decorations, music box<br>mobile that moves as a result of baby moving in bed | make faces<br>ritual games (pat-a-cake)<br>think safety in toys that go in mouth<br>sing/talk to baby<br>react |
| GETTING AROUND<br>(about 6 mo. to 12 mo.) | action—crawling, standing, walking<br>manipulation with hands and mouth<br>sense of self as doer<br>rhythm of absence/presence | things he/she can crawl under, get inside<br>toys for banging, inserting, twisting, pushing pulling, dropping, squeezing, opening, shutting<br>jack-in-box, toys which hide and reveal | gentle rough housing<br>think safety on anything that can go in mouth<br>knee, lap games, tug-o-war<br>peek-a-boo, hear-a-boo |
| EXPLORING<br>(about 1 to 2 years) | mobility—use of body<br>exploration and testing of relationships (objects as well as people)<br>look for something that's gone<br>imitation<br>making decisions—choice<br>language | wheel toys, push/pull toys, ball<br>construction toys for putting together, taking apart, blocks, containers for emptying and filling, things to throw<br>simple, sturdy books and pictures | chase and be chased<br>finger and hand games<br>hide and find things<br>pretend |
| DESIRE FOR MASTERY<br>(about 2 to 3 years) | testing surroundings and physical ability<br>exploration and construction<br>self mastery, desire to do it alone<br>performing<br>pretending<br>sustain play in small groups | pedal toys, punching toys<br>sand and water toys<br>drawing materials, water-soluble paints, block, play dough, pasting, puzzles, threading, lacing<br>puppets, books, records | switch roles<br>act out stories, tell stories<br>be an audience<br>help pretend<br>follow the leader, ring games (around the rosy) |
| MAKE BELIEVE<br>(about 3 to 4 years) | construct toy worlds<br>portray characters with feelings<br>sort and match<br>take turns, play cooperatively, make rules<br>music and rhythm<br>physical exploration | toy house, village, farm, etc.<br>dress up and make believe props for self, toys and dolls<br>blunt scissors, easel, clay<br>records, books on fantasy, familiar places and rhythms<br>simple music and rhythm instruments | participate in make believe<br>hide and seek |
| LEARNING ORDER<br>(about 4 to 5 years) | differentiate order/disorder<br>differentiate inclusion/exclusion<br>desire for courage and adequacy<br>establish play rituals<br>have secrets and surprises<br>act out imaginary characters | tinker toys, lego and other detailed construction toys<br>simple card and board games | provide place to keep toys orderly<br>play games of courage<br>allow some privacy |
| THE DREAMER<br>(about 5 to 7 years) | dream—think of "what if" situations<br>elaborate toy worlds<br>begin collections<br>team play<br>chasing and escaping<br>attack and defense<br>sense of self as separate person | comics and books, paper dolls<br>magnets, compass, magnifying glass<br>simple craft kits—weaving, sewing, construction kits<br>simple tools for clay, etc.<br>rope ladder, skates, stilts<br>two wheel bike | play "what if" games<br>improvise movements, objects, characters, situations, feelings<br>provide safe place to store collection<br>referee |
| ENJOYMENT OF THE ABSURD<br>(about 7 to 9 years) | guessing, riddling<br>develop pastimes—collections, hobbies<br>desire for correctness—no mistakes | card and board games<br>dominoes, checkers<br>mechanical, simple construction tools for woodworking, crafts, etc.<br>jump rope, stilts | play with double meanings<br>indulge nonsense<br>show your skill |
| DESIRE FOR COMPETENCE<br>(about 9 to 13 years) | concern with opinions of others<br>sense of self and feelings as unique<br>concerned with success/failure | intellectual games (scrabble, charades)<br>models<br>diaries, journals, notebooks<br>camping and exploring equipment<br>more complex craft tools | dramatize imaginary interactions, conflicts<br>ask about experiences, feelings<br>encourage creative writing<br>play sports<br>allow privacy |

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